

FORM B – BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125



Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

007800150A

Boston N.

781

Town Lexington

Place (*neighborhood or village*)

Address 16 Williams Rd.

Historic Name Joshua Simonds House

Uses: Present Residential

Original Residential

Date of Construction ca. 1830

Source Lexington Valuation lists

Style/Form Federal

Architect/Builder

Exterior Material:

Foundation Concrete

Wall/Trim Wood Clapboard

Roof Asphalt Shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures Garage

Major Alterations (*with dates*)

Rear additions, porch (before 1950)

Rear addition (after 1950)

Condition Good

Moved ☐ no ☒ yes Date 1950

Acreage 0.4 A.

Setting On a quiet side street in a neighborhood of 1930s houses

Recorded by Nancy S. Seasholes

Organization Lexington Historical Commission

Date (*month / year*) April 1998

Follow Massachusetts Historical Commission Survey Manual instructions for completing this form.

BUILDING FORM

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION ☐ see continuation sheet

Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community.

16 Williams Rd. is one of a number of Federal houses in Lexington, is well-preserved, and, though moved, has been in its present location almost 50 years. The house is rectangular, 2½ stories, five-by-one bays, and side-gabled with a rear chimney. At the rear is a front-gabled two-story two-by-three bay addition with a large chimney, a two-story one-by-one bay addition in reentrant angle, and a one-story one-by-three bay hip-roofed addition across the rest of the house. On the east elevation is a one-story flat-roofed porch with a railing on the roof. The center entrance has an elliptical fanlight and side pilasters; windows are 6/6 or 4/4 double hung sash. The two-car garage is clad with wood drop siding.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE ☐ see continuation sheet

Discuss the history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building, and the role(s) the owners/occupants played within the community.

This house was originally at 359 Bedford St., an area now occupied by the entrance and exit ramps of Route 128. The house was probably built by Joshua Simonds (1770–1858), although it is not clear exactly when. Joshua Simonds operated the Simonds Tavern, now at 331 Bedford St. (MHC #413), from 1802 to 1828. The north end of the tavern had been built by his father, also Joshua (1736–1805), reportedly in 1795 and Joshua Jr. added the south end in 1810. It is likely that Joshua Simonds Jr. lived at the tavern when he was the proprietor, but it is also clear from Lexington assessors' records that in 1831 he owned two houses, the tavern and presumably this one. An interior inspection found that the roof is framed with principal rafters nailed to a center ridge board, a type of construction characteristic of the early to mid-19th century, suggesting that Joshua Simonds may have built this house about 1830. The Simonds family owned the house until 1872; the next year it was purchased by an Alvan Whittaker and members of that family owned it into the 20th century. In 1950 when Route 128 was being constructed, this house was moved from its original site on Bedford St. to its present location on Williams Rd. Photographs taken at the time show that the house, along with two rear additions and side porch, was moved on the back of a flatbed truck.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES ☐ see continuation sheet

Bliss, Edward P. "The Old Taverns of Lexington." *Proceedings of the Lexington Historical Society* 1 (1889): 76, 81–82.

Hudson, Charles. *History of the Town of Lexington*. Revised and continued to 1912 by the Lexington Historical Society.

Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1913. 2: 621, 623–24, 626.

Lexington Valuation Lists. 1799–1831.

Middlesex Registry of Deeds. Deeds. Plans. Cambridge, MA. 1207: 156; 1242: 488; Pl. Bk. 10, Pl. 47.

Thomas Ragno, personal communication 1998.

☐ Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. *If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.*